STATE OF MARYLAND

DHMH

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
Mental Hygiene Administration
Spring Grove Hospital Center – Dix Building
55 Wade Avenue – Catonsville, Maryland 21228

Martin O'Malley, Governor – Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor – John M. Colmers, Secretary

Brian M. Hepburn, M.D., Executive Director

TO: CSA Directors; CSA SE Liaisons; MHVP-SEP Providers

FROM: Steve Reeder, MHA Chief of EBP Services and Program Evaluation

RE: Supported Employment Policy Clarification – Authorization Protocol; Revision of
            Length of Authorization Spans and Units of Service for Supported Employment
            Service Types

DATE: September 17, 2010; revised February 4, 2011; revised April 4, 2012

cc: Kate Drake, DORS

In an effort to avoid duplication of services, to reduce the administrative burden to Supported
Employment Program (SEP) providers and the Core Service Agencies (CSAs) who authorize
those services and in the interest of ensuring consistency in policy and practice across the state,
MHA has established for each supported employment service type a uniform length of the
authorization span, to which the CSA should adhere in reviewing, approving, and authorizing all
supported employment service requests. In most instances, the authorization span for each
supported employment service type will be automatically set by the Value Options system (cf.,
Value Options Maryland Provider Alert, ProviderConnect Enhancements, September 17, 2010).

For **Supported Employment Pre-placement (H2024),** the authorization span should begin on
the actual date of the initial interview with the consumer and extend for twelve months, inclusive
of the month of service request, ending on the last date of the 12th month. For example, if the
requested start date is September 17, 2010, the authorization span for the initial supported
employment pre-placement request will be from 09/17/10 through and inclusive of 08/31/11.
One unit of pre-placement services is granted per service authorization span. The authorization
request must be entered and submitted within fifteen (15) days of the date in which supported
employment services were initiated with the consumer. The CSA will review the authorization
request to determine if the provider entered the request within the fifteen (15) day time period.

Approval of reauthorization requests for supported employment pre-placement services may be granted in cases in which the consumer has not been placed within a competitive employment position within the initial twelve month authorization span.

DORS application and referral:
It is MHA's expectation that all supported employment consumers apply for eligibility for DORS services within the context of the **initial supported employment pre-placement authorization request**. **This requirement does not apply to concurrent supported employment authorization requests.** As a means to grant the DORS counselor access to the ValueOptions system in order to verify eligibility for supported employment services and access to long-term funding, the provider is required, within the supported employment section of ProviderConnect, to complete the DORS application and to endorse "No" in response to the screen prompt, "Does the individual have an assigned DORS Counselor?", even if the consumer already has an open, active case with DORS and an existing, assigned DORS counselor. The CSA will review the authorization request to ensure that the DORS application has been completed.

Once consent from the consumer has been secured, the provider must endorse "Yes" in response to the screen prompts, "Does this consumer agree to be referred to DORS?" and "Has the consumer signed an authorization for release of information, permitting the DORS counselor to access health information contained in the ValueOptions Maryland system, pertaining to alcohol and substance abuse and HIV/AIDS?' The provider must then either attach a scanned, signed copy of the approved ValueOptions Maryland Release of Information (ROI) form (cf., *Authorization to Disclose Health Information, LC417 Form A in MD, 1/25/2010)* to the authorization request in ProviderConnect or fax a signed copy of the form to ValueOptions Maryland at 1-877-502-1037. If the ROI is faxed rather than attached to the authorization request, the provider must document to the CSA that the ROI has been sent. Such documentation may be entered within the Type of Services Section in the clinical criteria text box in ProviderConnect. In order to appropriately route the supported employment authorization request to the consumers' DORS Counselors, the provider must select from the drop down box the name of the DORS counselor liaison that has been identified by DORS to receive referrals for their agency. As soon as the authorization request has been approved by the CSA, the provider should send a courtesy e-mail to the DORS counselor and the DORS counselor's supervisor containing the authorization number of the supported employment service request.

If the consumer refuses DORS referral or consent, then provider is instructed to use the pre-placement phase to explore and to resolve any barriers to the DORS referral process prior to job placement. In the rare instance, when the individual refuses to be referred for DORS services, and multiple failed attempts to engage in DORS Services have been documented, and all other avenues to resolution of issues precluding the individual from accessing DORS services have been exhausted, a waiver of the referral requirement may be granted, with CSA approval, and supporting documentation. Such documentation may be entered within the Type of Services Section in the clinical criteria text box in Provider Connect or attached as a separate document to the authorization request. However, such a scenario should be viewed as an exception, not the norm.

For Supported Employment Job Placement (H2024-21), the authorization span will begin on the date of job initiation (the first date of employment) and extend for forty-five (45) calendar days, ending on the forty-fifth (45th) calendar day. One (1) unit of supported employment job placement service is granted per service authorization span. The authorization request must be entered and submitted within fifteen (15) days of the first date of consumer employment. The CSA will review the authorization request to determine if the provider entered the request within the fifteen (15) time period.

For all job placement authorization requests, the primary job placement information is required. A consumer may have only one active primary job at a time. The CSA will review the Job Placement information section to screen for agency-sponsored employment. Any supported employment placement occurring in a facility, entity, subsidiary, affiliate, or contract site that is owned, operated, or managed by its own approved supported employment program or its parent or umbrella organization will be considered to be agency-sponsored employment and will not be eligible for supported employment service authorization and reimbursement within the Public Mental Health System (PMHS). Job placement information entered within ProviderConnect should reflect the name of the consumer's employer (name as it appears on the consumer's paycheck), and the site address of the location wherein the consumer physically reports to work (not the employer's corporate address).

In addition, it is MHA's expectation that the Individual Vocational Plan (IVP) be submitted as part of the authorization request for job placement. The provider may either enter the content of the IVP into the existing individual plan template within the supported employment work flow or attach a copy of the completed plan to the authorization request in ProviderConnect. As a condition for authorization of the job placement service, the CSA will review the authorization request in order to verify and confirm the presence of the IVP. The consumer's signature on the plan, although a required element for regulatory compliance, is not necessary for the plan to be submitted within the ValueOptions Maryland system.

A request for reauthorization of the supported employment job placement service may be approved at the CSA's discretion, not to exceed three (3) service authorizations within a rolling twelve (12) month authorization span, based on a change in individual circumstances or the emergence of a new service need. If a job placement authorization already exists, the prior authorization request will be automatically adjusted to end the day before the requested start date of the current authorization request. Approval of reauthorization requests is not guaranteed and the request must reflect the need for a separate and independent job development activity. For all job placement reauthorization requests, if there is an existing primary job on record, the provider will be required to complete the Job "End Date" and the "Reason for Leaving" fields in order to end the existing primary job before entering job placement information for a new primary job placement.

For **Supported Employment Intensive Job Coaching (H2023),** the authorization span will extend concurrent with the authorization span for supported employment job placement (H2024-21).   In accordance with existing MHA policy and procedure, the SEP provider will submit a request for authorization of supported employment intensive job coaching services **(H2023)** to

the relevant CSA jurisdiction, and specify the estimated number of units of service required, based upon the consumer employee's specific job duties and a corresponding assessment of the expected frequency, intensity, and duration of his or her support needs. The CSA may grant authorizations for up to 400 units of service per consumer, with one (1) unit of service equal to 15 minutes of intervention with or on behalf of the consumer. The authorization request must be entered and submitted within 15 days of the first date of consumer employment. The CSA will review the authorization request to determine if the provider entered the request within the 15 day time period. For all intensive job coaching requests, an active primary job is required.

All existing DORS policies and procedures apply [**cf., DORS PROGRAM DIRECTIVE 10-10 AND RSM 2 - VR & IL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES, ATTACHMENT 800-1, INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETION OF THE JOB COACHING PROGRESS REPORT (RS-7d), Revised 03/10].** In order for the CSA to approve and authorize the supported employment intensive job coaching service, official documentation of the DORS denial of service must be submitted coincident with the intensive job coaching authorization request. This must be in the form of a letter signed by the DORS field counselor on DORS letterhead stating the rationale and justification for the denial of service. The letter may be either faxed to the SE liaison of the relevant CSA jurisdiction or scanned and attached to the service request**.**

For **Supported Employment Extended Support Services** (**H2026, for Non Evidence-Based Practice providers, Ongoing Support to Maintain Employment, per month**) and (**H2026-21, for Evidence-Based Practice providers, Ongoing Support to Maintain Employment, per month**)**,** the authorization span should begin on the date immediately following the expiration of the supported employment job placement authorization span or the 46th calendar date of employment and extend for twelve (12) months, inclusive of the month of request, ending on the last date of the twelfth month. One (1) unit of supported employment extended support services is granted per month of authorized services, or twelve (12) units for twelve months of authorized services. The authorization request must be entered and submitted within 15 days of the date of expiration of the job placement authorization span. The CSA will review the authorization request to determine if the provider entered the request within the 15 day time period. For all extended/ongoing support services requests, an active primary job is required and a prior pre-placement or job placement authorization must be on file. Authorizations may be renewed every twelve (12) months.

Since **Supported Employment Clinical Coordination (S9445-52, for Evidence-Based Practice providers)** may be requested in conjunction with the initial or concurrent request for authorization for any supported employment service type, in order to minimize the administrative burden to providers, the authorization span for supported employment clinical coordination will begin on the same date as the requested start of the corresponding supported employment service type that is being requested coincident with clinical coordination authorization request and extend for twelve months, inclusive of the month of service request, ending on the last date of the 12th month. One (1) unit of supported employment clinical coordination is granted per month of authorized services per month of authorized services, or twelve (12) units for twelve months of authorized services Clinical coordination may not be requested, approved, or authorized as a standalone service request.

If a clinical coordination authorization already exists, the prior authorization request will be automatically adjusted to end the day before the requested start date of the current authorization request. For ease of provider and CSA tracking and monitoring, supported employment providers are advised to request clinical coordination coincident with the authorization request for each and every supported employment service type.

PRP to Individuals in Supported Employment (S9445, for Non Evidence-Based Practice providers, any combination of on/off-site PRP Services for a consumer in a Supported Employment Program) may be requested in conjunction with the initial or concurrent request for authorization for supported employment extended support services (H2026). The consumer must be competitively employed to receive this service. This service may **not** be authorized concurrent with pre-placement, job placement, or intensive job coaching services.

If you have any additional questions or require further clarification to the above policy, please consult Steve Reeder, MHA at 410-402-8476 or by e-mail at sreeder@dhmh.state.md.us